

5 Feb 1969

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Excerpts from the interviews with recent visitors from the Ukraine

I. Source: Male, Ukrainian, born 1922 in West Ukraine, working in a kolhosp in Buchach area, obl. Ternopol; married, has a daughter; finished 7 grades of primary school; quite well read as for his education; former Jehovah's Witness; Nov 1968 arrived on a visit to his brother in Toronto, Ont., Canada.

1/ July/Aug 1968, prior to Soviet invasion in the CSSR, all trucks and tractors together with drivers were mobilized in Source's and other nearby kolhosps. They were used for transporting supplies for the army to the CSSR border. According to Source they did not enter CSSR territory but were kept on the Soviet side of the frontier. Other "units" took over on the border. The population in West Ukraine was definitely on the side of Czecks and Dubcek.

2/ A few years ago Source "deserted" Jehovah's Witnesses because he did not want to obstruct his daughter's education. As a rule children of Jehovah's witnesses have no chances to get to institutes and universities. There were 5 Jehovah witnesses in Source's kolhosp. Recently the persecution of Jehovah's witnesses increased. Authorities call them American agents and those with whom Jehovah's Witnesses' literature is found, are sentenced to from 7 to 10 years imprisonment in concentration camps.

3/ In 1950 Source's then 16 year old sister was arrested by the KGB for contacts with the UPA. In Source's opinion she had nothing to do with the Underground. Her relatives bribed some KGB officers ^{in Ternopol} with Rubel 1,000.- and they let her go. According to Source, in 1950's, at the time when the Underground was already practically non-existent, the KGB used to arrest young people for the simple purpose to press out bribes from their relatives.

4/ Most villages are now electrified, rebuilt, and look quite different than before and during the WW II. "In Khrushchev's time there was less to eat but more freedom, at present - there is more to eat but less freedom".

5/ Source knew about recent arrests and trials in the Ukraine. He knew in general from hear say and learned some details from foreign broadcasts. "Everybody listens to foreign radios".

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6. People are afraid of war and would prefer some other way out. But they don't believe the present regime could really change things.

II. Source: Female, aged 60, for 3 years on pension, prior to that ^{"formally"} worked in a Kolhosp in Berezhany area (UHAYNIV), obl. Ternopil, Ukr SSR; primary school educated, her daughter is a teacher; end-October 1968 arrived to Yonkers, N.Y. to join her husband. Owing to parcels Source was receiving from the USA she was on good terms with kolhosp administration and in reality did not have to work.

1/ In recent years Ternopil became very known all over Ukraine as a famous black market, bigger than Lvov. According to Source it is being attended even by people from Russian cities, and Georgia.

2/ In kolhosps there is a gap not only between kolhospnyks and administrators but also between common kolhospnyks and those working on "ferms" (poultry and pig breeding etc) who are much better off than the former.

According to Source most kolhospnyks , particularly the young ones, would refuse private ownership on land. They would prefer to stay in a kolhosp but with better wages.

There is great desire among young country people to get to cities and universities but every year it's getting harder and harder.

(Source's son studies medicine.)

3/ People are much less afraid of terror than in Stalin's time. " Previously when a truck came to village everybody expected to be arrested or deported, nowadays no one pays attention to trucks and cars."

" People also use to criticize authorities".

4/ People listen to foreign broadcasts and on the whole are quite well informed about what's going on in the world.

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